

ADVANTAGE 2024 SHOPPER OUTLOOK

SHOPPING PREFERENCES

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ADVANTAGE 2024 SHOPPER OUTLOOK METHODOLOGY

RESPONDENT AND SURVEY DETAILS

8,017 valid responses were collected and retained after 9,675 total responses were recorded. The sample was collected to reflect nationally representative primary shopper demographics of age, gender, household income and regional location.

30 minutes The survey was completed in an average of 30 minutes after removing outliers. The median length was 25 minutes.

We will release multiple publications from this study. This first release covers category and retailer shopping preferences.

METHODOLOGY

Between October 31 and December 5, 2023, SMARTeam™ CPG Consulting, a division of Advantage Solutions, conducted an online survey to understand shopper sentiment about retailers, category importance and satisfaction.

In this study, a meaningful or “significant” difference is +/- 5% with a 95% confidence level for total respondents. Most subsets of the total group have a confidence level of 90 to 95%.

Various descriptive statistics were calculated for all data. “Don’t Know/No Response” responses were most often removed and not included in statistical testing or sample sizes. Responses to open-ended, free response questions were coded and categorized.

Limitations and caveats: Online surveys use non-probability convenience sampling. Results are excellent for exploratory research for generating insights and testing hypotheses.

KEY FINDINGS

Inflation

Shoppers continue to make changes in purchase behavior due to inflation, looking for ways to save. Less than half (41%) say their shopping habits haven't changed.

They are reducing how much they buy and are likely to switch brands/products in search of lower prices. More than half are buying less expensive options (55%), have switched to lower priced brands (52%) and/or will continue to buy lower priced brands (55%). Some shoppers are even skipping meals to save money.

While they will switch what they buy, they are less likely to change where they buy. 65% shop a couple retailers regularly, but 27% are dedicated to one retailer – resuming pre-COVID habits after significant shift in 2021.

Retailer Decision Making

Net Promoter Scores (NPS) across retailers have improved from 2016 and 2021 comparisons, speaking to the resurgence of brick-and-mortar shopping. Average NPS is up 11pts compared to 2016.

Costco earns the highest NPS (77) among top retailers and outpaces average growth.

Despite modest NPS ratings, Walmart and Kroger dominate shopper satisfaction. Walmart wins for nearly all high-level retailer considerations, while Kroger earns top score for their fresh meat.

Store Environment

While overall NPS is up, shoppers are less engaged with the store. Following a number of global stressors, the COVID-19 pandemic and continued inflation, shoppers have lost their enthusiasm.

Moderated expectations are evident in decreased interest in store associates. Affordable, accurate prices, in-stock assortment, and cleanliness are top of mind while nice-to-have store amenities have dropped in importance.

Although shoppers care less about store environment/associates compared to previous years, store associates still have a place at checkout. Manned checkout remains preferred over self-checkout with 67% saying it is important.

Categories

Retailers with broader selection like Walmart and Target appeal to shoppers' desire for affordable variety.

Meal Ingredients:

74% avg. satisfaction and lowest lost sales rate among categories; room to improve on international foods.

Ready-to-Eat/Drink:

74% avg. satisfaction; room to improve on alcohol and non-carbonated beverages.

Frozen & Dairy:

Highest avg. satisfaction (77%) across categories with 4 groups earning 80%+; room to improve dairy free.

Health and Beauty Care:

Grocery stores' health and beauty Care offerings fall short. Lowest satisfaction and highest lost sales rate.

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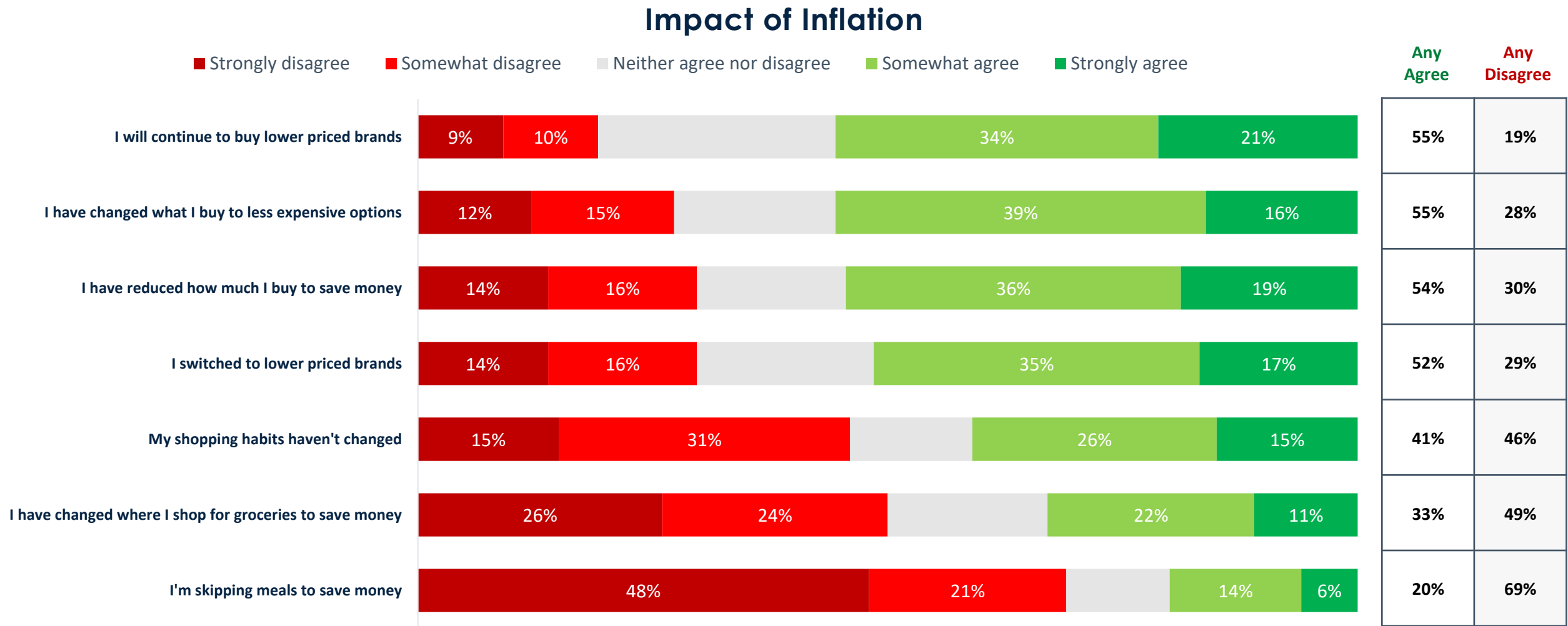
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Total Respondent

Retailer Decision Making

SHOPPERS STILL FEEL IMPACT OF INFLATION; LOOK TO LOWER PRICED OPTIONS AND WILL SWITCH BRANDS/PRODUCTS TO SAVE MONEY

1 in 5 shoppers skipping meals to save money







Q: Inflationary pressures have impacted people differently. How much do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

Source: SMART Market Research – Advantage 2024 Shopper Outlook

Base: 8,017

SHOPPERS RESUME PRE-PANDEMIC NUMBER OF STORES SHOPPED

While majority shop a couple of stores, 27% shop only 1 retailer regularly

		<u>2018</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
	I go to the same (1) store for groceries nearly all the time	28%	37%	28%	27%
	I have a couple of preferred stores for groceries – it just depends what's on my shopping list	65%	53%	63%	65%
	I shop at a number of stores for groceries – I don't have one favorite store	6%	9%	9%	7%
	I only shop online for groceries		2%	1%	1%

Q: When thinking about groceries, please select the statement below that best describes your shopping behavior.

NET PROMOTER SCORE (NPS) HELPS BUSINESSES EVALUATE HOW BUYERS FEEL ABOUT THEIR PRODUCT

Net Promoter Score Definition:

On a scale of -100 to 100, a Net Promoter Score evaluates the likelihood that a buyer will refer a product to friends or family.

Net Promoter Score Calculation:

Calculated as the % of respondents who are “promoters” minus the % of respondents who are “detractors.”



Promoters: (score 9 – 10)

Loyal enthusiasts who will keep buying and refer others, fueling growth.

Passives: (score 7 – 8)

Satisfied but unenthusiastic customers who are vulnerable to competitive offerings.

Detractors: (score 0 – 6)

Unhappy customers who can damage your brand and impede growth through negative word of mouth.

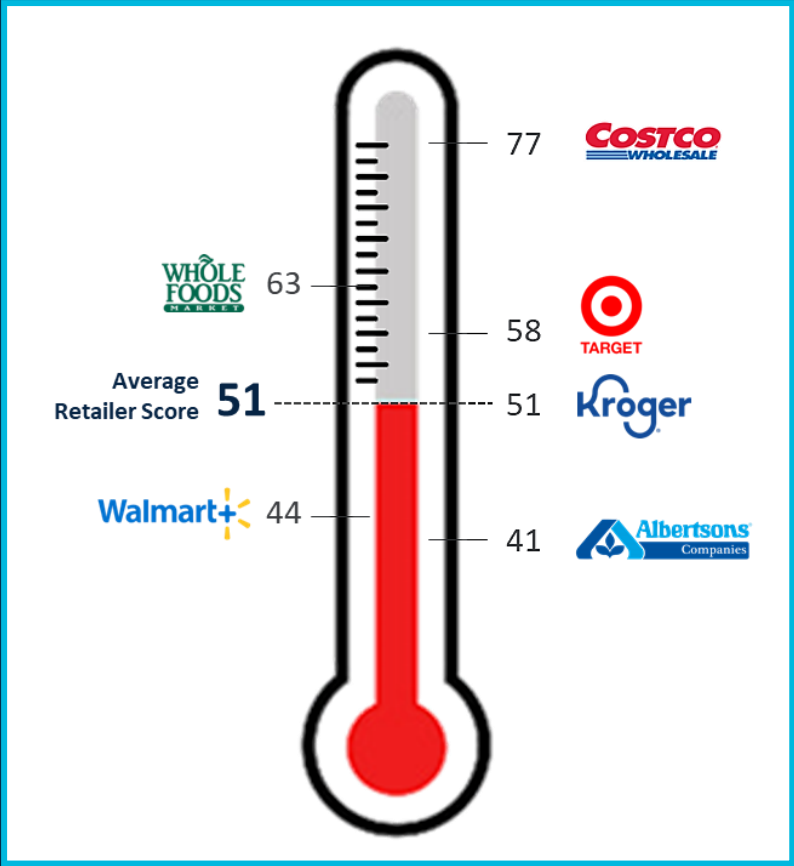
RETAILERS' NPS INCREASED VS 2021 WHICH ALIGNS WITH RESURGENCE OF BRICK & MORTAR SHOPPING

NPS ratings often skew higher for specialty
retailers with hyper-loyal shoppers

Primary Retailer	NPS 2016	NPS 2021	NPS 2023	CHG vs 2016	CHG vs 2021
Total Retailer Average	40	47	51	+11	+4
Walmart	31	34	44	+13	+10
Kroger Co.	51	46	51	0	+5
ACI	27	39	41	+14	+2
Costco	64	64	77	+13	+13
Whole Foods	64	60	63	-1	+3
Target	51	52	58	+7	+6

- Average Net Promoter Score (51) up 11pts compared to 2016 (41)

Net Promoter Score (NPS)



Costco earns the highest NPS and
outpaces total retailer average growth

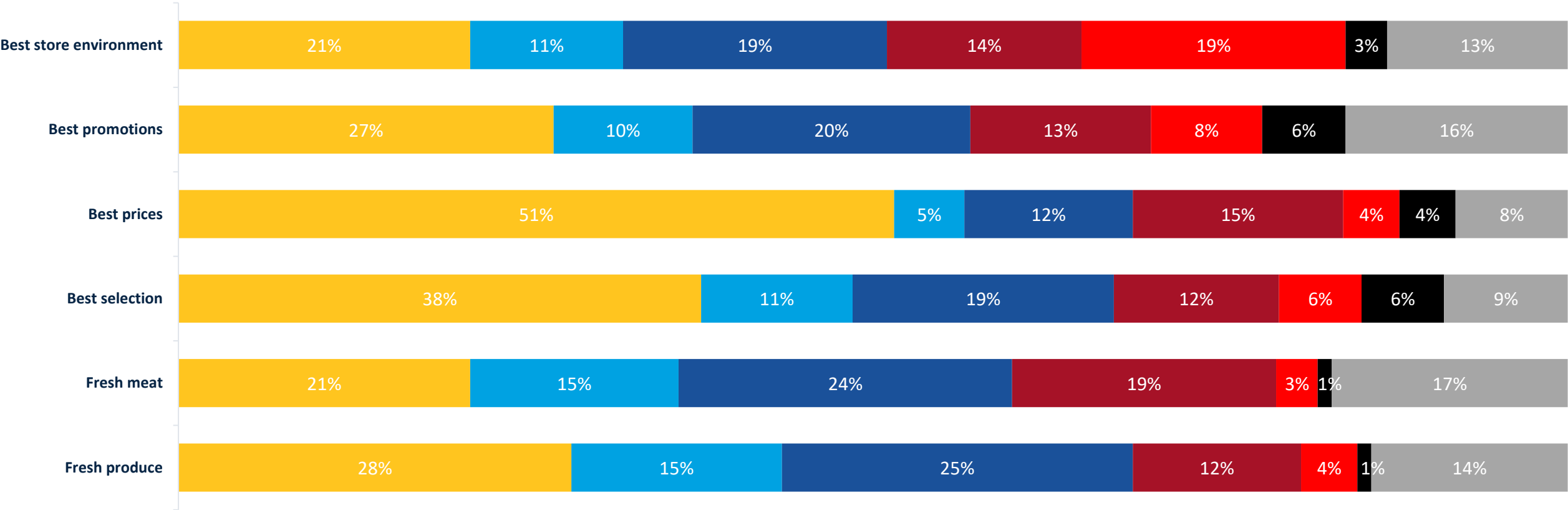
Q: On a scale from 0-10, how likely are you to recommend {Selected Retailer} to a friend, family member or colleague?

Source: SMART Market Research – Advantage 2024 Shopper Outlook

WALMART SCORES HIGHEST AMONG TOP RETAILERS ACROSS NEARLY ALL CONSIDERATIONS; 51% SELECT IT FOR BEST PRICES

National retailer comparison of specific offerings

Walmart ACI Kroger Co. Costco Target Amazon.com N/A



- Kroger Co. wins for shopper’s perception of fresh meat







Q: Of these national retailers, which one do you think is the best for the following considerations?

Source: SMART Market Research – Advantage 2024 Shopper Outlook

Base: 8,017

WALMART AND KROGER EARN HIGHEST OVERALL SATISFACTION SCORES ACROSS STORE

Net shopper satisfaction by primary retailer and department

	TOTAL						
Total Store	74%	77%	76%	70%	72%	74%	72%
Meal Ingredients	74%	76%	77%	70%	69%	73%	70%
Ready-to-Eat/Drink	74%	76%	78%	74%	71%	73%	74%
Frozen & Dairy	77%	78%	80%	76%	77%	80%	72%
Health and Beauty Care	66%	77%	62%	50%	68%	66%	77%

- Walmart and Target dominate shopper satisfaction for health and beauty Care
- ACI’s low overall satisfaction score dragged down by meal ingredient and personal consumable categories

Q: How satisfied do you feel when shopping for these items at {Selected Retailer}?

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Total Respondent

Store Environment







SHOPPERS CHOOSE PRIMARY RETAILER BASED ON PRICE, EASE OF NAVIGATING STORE AND OVERALL ASSORTMENT

Drivers for primary store selection

Convenience		
	Purchase Other Items	44%
	Purchase Vitamins	19%
	Fill Prescriptions	15%

Price		
	Everyday Low Price	63%
	Sales & Promotions	53%

Store Environment/Offerings		
	Easy to Navigate	51%
	Store Brand	43%
	Store Environment	39%
	Loyalty Program	36%
	Digital/Online Services	23%
	Curbside Pick-up	22%
	Home Delivery	18%
	Samples	13%

Category Assortment		
	Best Produce	49%
	Best Meat	41%
	Best Groceries	40%
	Best HH Goods	36%
	Best Personal Care	26%
	Best Non-Food	19%







Product Availability		
	Best Assortment	50%
	Product Exclusivity	42%
	Reliable Supply	36%

= overall top 5

Q: Why do you choose to buy groceries at {Selected Retailer}? Select all that apply.
Q: What are the reasons you choose to buy groceries at {Selected Retailer}? Select all that apply.

SHOPPERS CONCERNED ABOUT PRICE AND PROMOTIONS, DRIVING STORE CHOICE AND INTEREST IN LOYALTY PROGRAMS

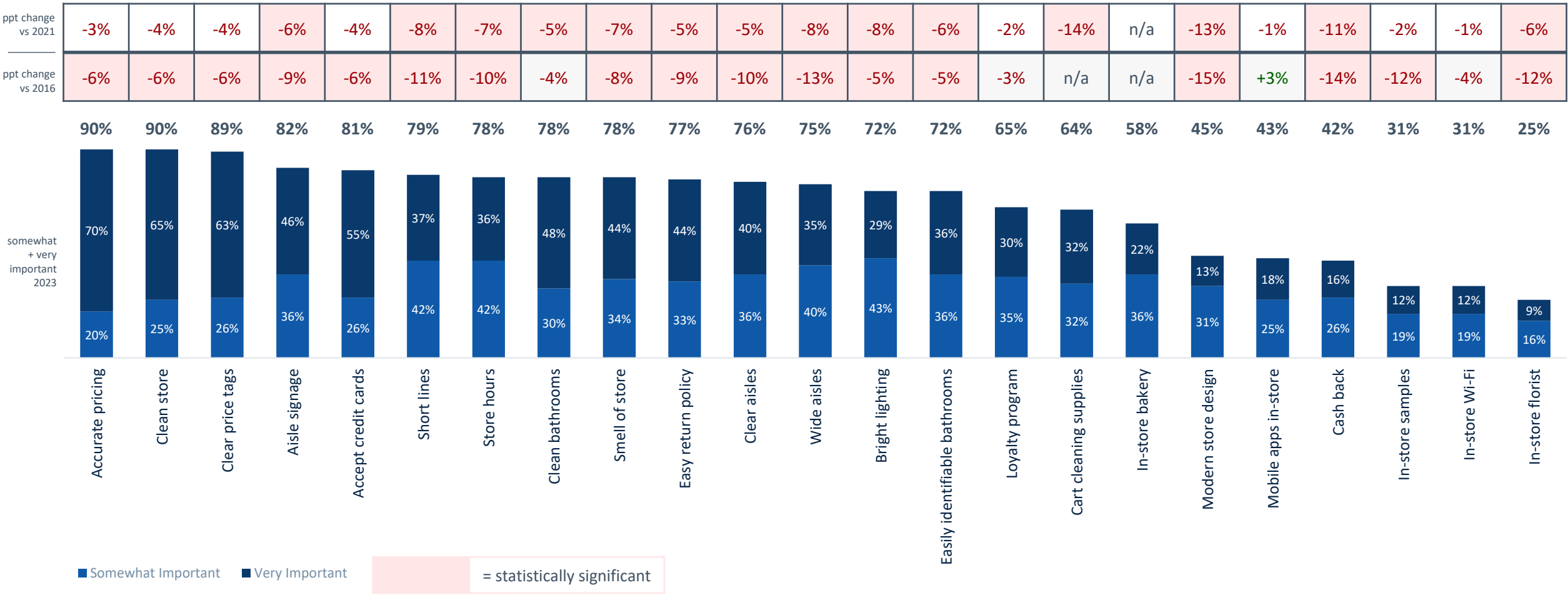
Grocery store selection by retailer

																																																																	
<div>67% shop Walmart</div> <div>30% <u>primarily</u> shop Walmart</div>	<div>32% shop Kroger Co.</div> <div>12% <u>primarily</u> shop Kroger Co.</div>	<div>37% shop ACI</div> <div>8% <u>primarily</u> shop ACI</div>	<div>30% shop Costco</div> <div>7% <u>primarily</u> shop Costco</div>	<div>15% shop Whole Foods</div> <div>2% <u>primarily</u> shop Whole Foods</div>	<div>35% shop Target</div> <div>3% <u>primarily</u> shop Target</div>																																																												
<div>Conversion</div> <div>45%</div>	<div>Conversion</div> <div>37%</div>	<div>Conversion</div> <div>29%</div>	<div>Conversion</div> <div>23%</div>	<div>Conversion</div> <div>13%</div>	<div>Conversion</div> <div>9%</div>																																																												
<div>Shoppers looking for variety of categories at a low cost</div>	<div>Shoppers drawn by loyalty programs and variety of assortment</div>	<div>Shoppers intrigued by promotions and easy-to-find assortment</div>	<div>Shoppers looking to save money and stock up on quality store brand items</div>	<div>Shoppers seeking quality favorites to match their lifestyle</div>	<div>Shoppers looking to satisfy variety of usage occasions</div>																																																												
<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Everyday Low Price</td><td>74%</td></tr><tr><td>Purchase Other Items</td><td>62%</td></tr><tr><td>Best HH Goods</td><td>58%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Assortment</td><td>52%</td></tr><tr><td>Easy to Navigate</td><td>48%</td></tr></table>	Everyday Low Price	74%	Purchase Other Items	62%	Best HH Goods	58%	Best Assortment	52%	Easy to Navigate	48%	<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Sales & Promotions</td><td>72%</td></tr><tr><td>Loyalty Program</td><td>72%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Produce</td><td>60%</td></tr><tr><td>Everyday Low Price</td><td>54%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Assortment</td><td>54%</td></tr></table>	Sales & Promotions	72%	Loyalty Program	72%	Best Produce	60%	Everyday Low Price	54%	Best Assortment	54%	<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Sales & Promotions</td><td>68%</td></tr><tr><td>Loyalty Program</td><td>66%</td></tr><tr><td>Easy to Navigate</td><td>54%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Produce</td><td>53%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Meat</td><td>49%</td></tr></table>	Sales & Promotions	68%	Loyalty Program	66%	Easy to Navigate	54%	Best Produce	53%	Best Meat	49%	<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Everyday Low Price</td><td>66%</td></tr><tr><td>Sales & Promotions</td><td>61%</td></tr><tr><td>Store Brand</td><td>54%</td></tr><tr><td>Best HH Goods</td><td>54%</td></tr><tr><td>Product Exclusivity</td><td>53%</td></tr></table>	Everyday Low Price	66%	Sales & Promotions	61%	Store Brand	54%	Best HH Goods	54%	Product Exclusivity	53%	<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Best Produce</td><td>73%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Groceries</td><td>69%</td></tr><tr><td>Product Exclusivity</td><td>64%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Meat</td><td>61%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Assortment</td><td>61%</td></tr></table>	Best Produce	73%	Best Groceries	69%	Product Exclusivity	64%	Best Meat	61%	Best Assortment	61%	<div>Primary Drivers</div> <table><tr><td>Sales & Promotions</td><td>60%</td></tr><tr><td>Best Personal Care</td><td>57%</td></tr><tr><td>Store Environment</td><td>54%</td></tr><tr><td>Easy to Navigate</td><td>52%</td></tr><tr><td>Purchase Other Items</td><td>52%</td></tr></table>	Sales & Promotions	60%	Best Personal Care	57%	Store Environment	54%	Easy to Navigate	52%	Purchase Other Items	52%
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Base: 5,397 2,398	2,548 937	2,150 617	2,366 561	1,239 143	2,767 246																																																												

Q: Which store(s) have you shopped for groceries in the past six months? Q: Thinking about where you've shopped for groceries in the past six months, where have you spent the most money on groceries?
Q: Why do you choose to buy groceries at {Selected Retailer}? Select all that apply.

CLEAR, ACCURATE PRICING AND STORE CLEANLINESS MATTER MOST TO SHOPPERS; 65% SAY LOYALTY PROGRAMS IMPORTANT

Shoppers adjusted expectations after COVID with less emphasis on store specifics



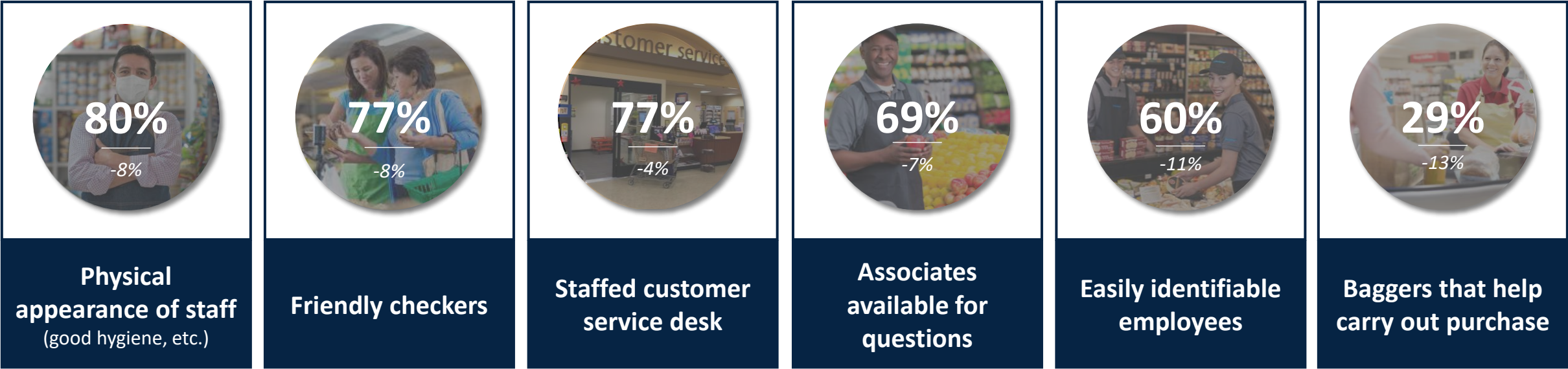
Q: Think about your in-store experience. In the next several questions, you'll be asked how important particular in-store aspects are. Please take time to read each statement and assess its importance. How important are the following?
Q: Now think about the store environment. How important are the following? Q: Some services matter more than others. How important are the following when choosing a store for groceries?

TIDY APPEARANCE OF STAFF AND FRIENDLINESS REMAIN SHOPPERS' TOP IMPORTANCE FACTORS FOR IN-STORE EMPLOYEES

Shoppers care less about store associates' availability

2023

ppt change
vs 2021



- While order of importance remained consistent, shoppers place lower importance across staffing attributes compared to 2021
- Lower importance of staffing attributes speaks to the lasting impact of COVID



Q: Think about your in-store experience. In the next several questions, you'll be asked how important particular in-store aspects are. Please take time to read each statement and assess its importance. How important are the following?
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MANNED CHECKOUT LANES MORE IMPORTANT TO SHOPPERS THAN SELF-CHECKOUT

53% consider self-checkout important

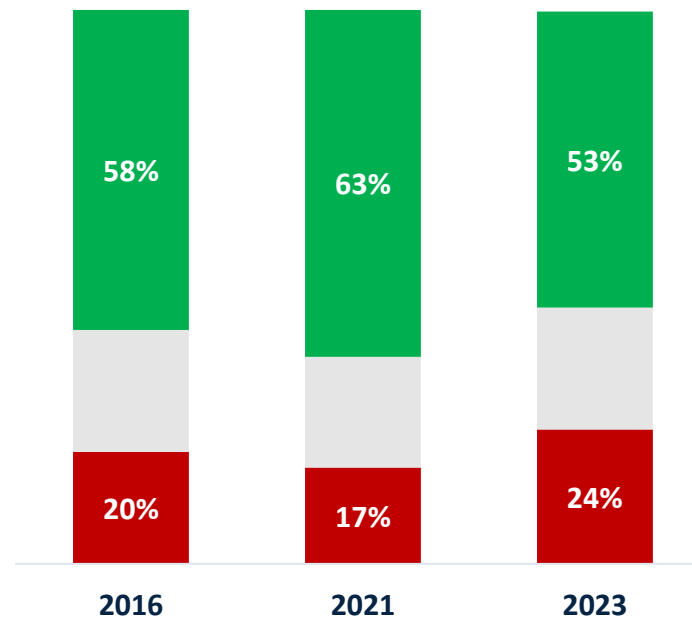


Checkout (Somewhat + Very Important)

	Manned checkout lanes	67%
	Self-checkout	53%

Self-checkout Importance Over Time

■ Not Important ■ Neutral ■ Important



Overall importance of self-checkout down 10pts compared to 2021, and down 5pts compared to 2016

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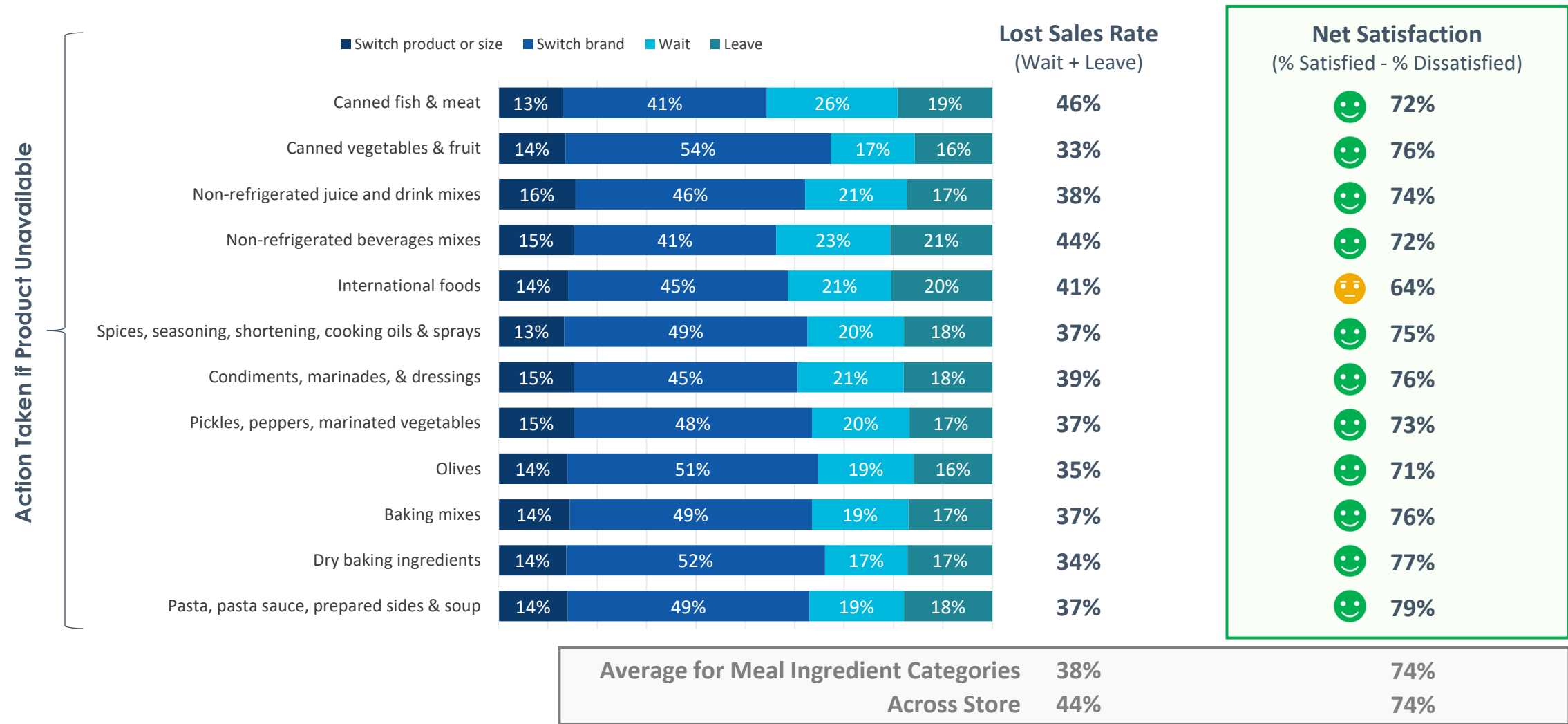


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Total Respondent

Category Satisfaction

MEAL INGREDIENTS: AVERAGE 74% SATISFACTION AND LOWER LOST SALES RATE THAN OTHER CATEGORIES; 62% WOULD STILL BUY IN-STORE IF PREFERRED PRODUCT UNAVAILABLE

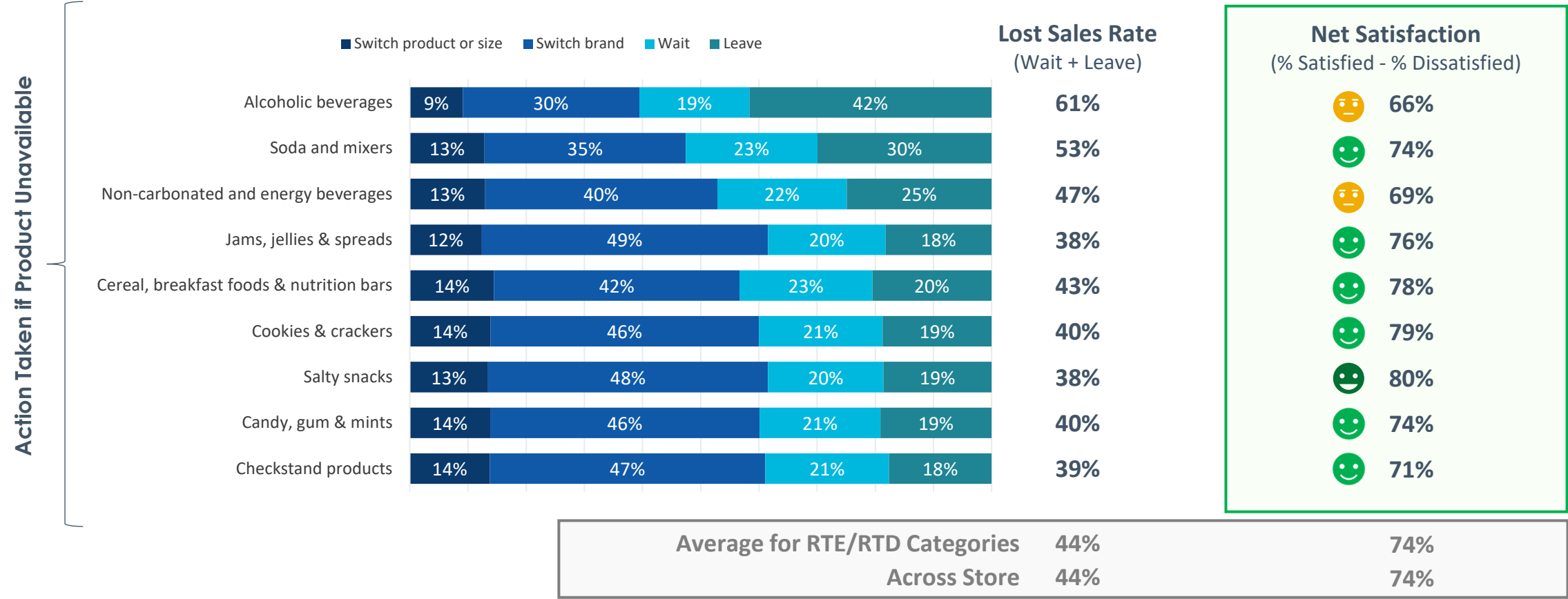


Q: When shopping for the following products, what would you do if your preferred product was not available at {Selected Retailer}?

Q: How satisfied do you feel when shopping for these items at {Selected Retailer}?

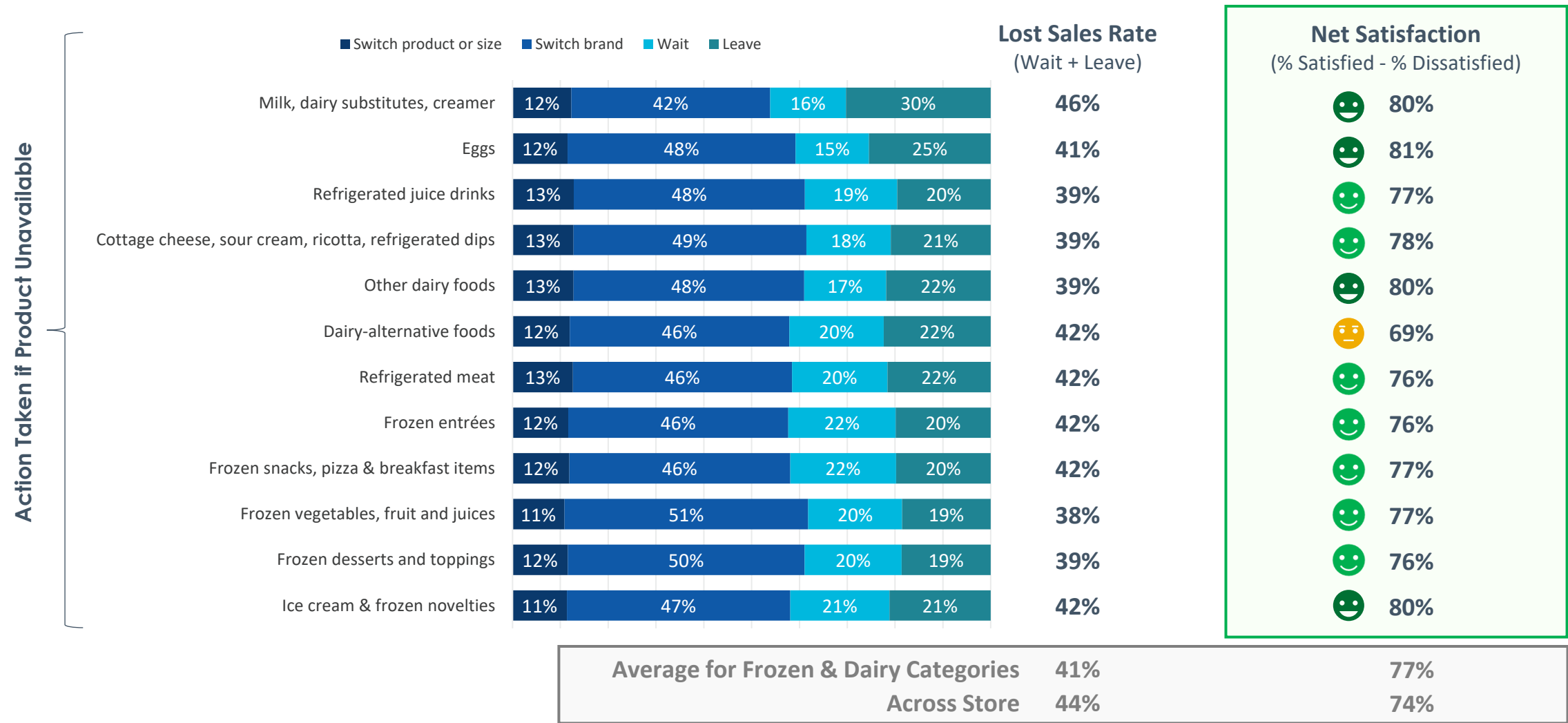
READY-TO-EAT/DRINK: AVERAGE 74% SATISFACTION; 56% WOULD STILL BUY IN-STORE IF PREFERRED PRODUCT UNAVAILABLE

Alcoholic and non-carbonated beverages see lowest satisfaction among RTD



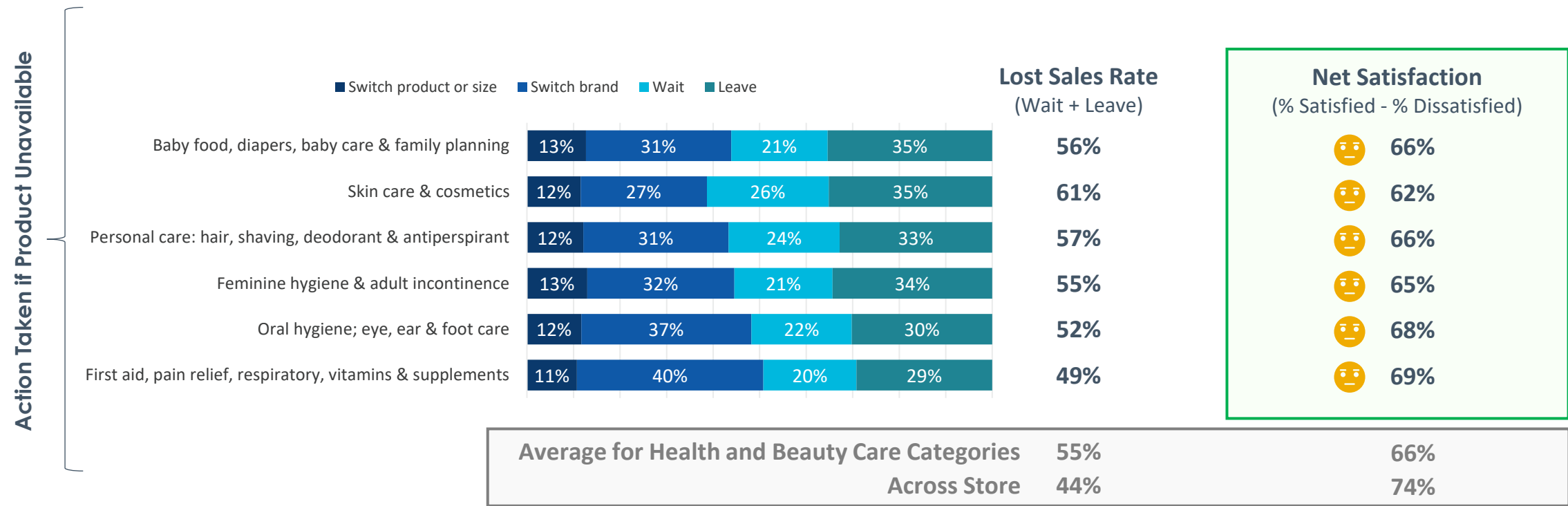
Q: When shopping for the following products, what would you do if your preferred product was not available at {Selected Retailer}?
Q: How satisfied do you feel when shopping for these items at {Selected Retailer}?

FROZEN & DAIRY: AVERAGE 77% SATISFACTION HIGHEST ACROSS STORE; 59% WOULD BUY IF PREFERRED PRODUCT UNAVAILABLE



Q: When shopping for the following products, what would you do if your preferred product was not available at {Selected Retailer}?
Q: How satisfied do you feel when shopping for these items at {Selected Retailer}?

HEALTH AND BEAUTY CARE: AVERAGE 66% SATISFACTION LOWEST ACROSS STORE; 45% STILL BUY IF PREFERRED PRODUCT UNAVAILABLE



Q: When shopping for the following products, what would you do if your preferred product was not available at {Selected Retailer}?

Q: How satisfied do you feel when shopping for these items at {Selected Retailer}?

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Total Respondent

Demographics

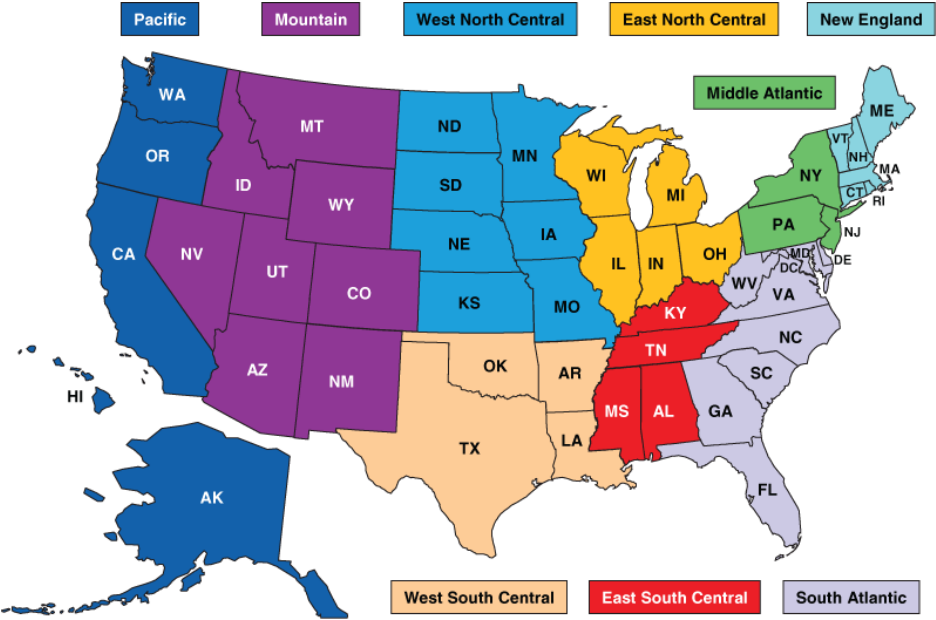
DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER	Female	60%
	Male	39%
	Other	1%
AGE	18-20	3%
	21-24	6%
	25-40	27%
	41-60	34%
	61-75	24%
	75+	6%
ETHNICITY	Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino	14%
	None of these	86%
RACE	White	76%
	Black or African American	11%
	Asian	5%
	American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%
	Multi-racial	3%
	Other	3%

HOUSEHOLD INCOME	Less than \$25,000	14%
	\$25,000 - \$49,999	19%
	\$50,000 - \$74,999	17%
	\$75,000 - \$99,999	14%
	\$100,000 - \$149,999	21%
	\$150,000 or more	13%
RELATIONSHIP STATUS	Prefer not to say	1%
	Single, never married	26%
	Married	49%
	Divorced	9%
	Separated	1%
	Widowed	4%
	Living with partner	9%

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	1	18%
	2	37%
	3 to 4	35%
	5 or more	11%
CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD	None	67%
	1 Child	15%
	2 – 3 Children	16%
	4 or More Children	2%

REGIONALITY



REGION	Pacific	15%
	Mountain	8%
	West North Central	6%
	East North Central	15%
	Middle Atlantic	13%
	New England	5%
	West South Central	12%
	East South Central	6%
	South Atlantic	20%

STATE	Alabama	1%
	Alaska	<1%
	Arizona	3%
	Arkansas	1%
	California	11%
	Colorado	2%
	Connecticut	1%
	Delaware	<1%
	District of Columbia	<1%
	Florida	7%
	Georgia	3%
	Hawaii	<1%
	Idaho	<1%
	Illinois	4%
	Indiana	2%
	Iowa	1%
	Kansas	1%
	Kentucky	1%
	Louisiana	1%
	Maine	<1%
	Maryland	2%
	Massachusetts	2%
	Michigan	3%
	Minnesota	1%
	Mississippi	1%
	Missouri	2%

STATE	Montana	<1%
	Nebraska	<1%
	Nevada	1%
	New Hampshire	1%
	New Jersey	3%
	New Mexico	1%
	New York	6%
	North Carolina	3%
	North Dakota	<1%
	Ohio	4%
	Oklahoma	1%
	Oregon	2%
	Pennsylvania	4%
	Puerto Rico	<1%
	Rhode Island	<1%
	South Carolina	1%
	South Dakota	<1%
	Tennessee	2%
	Texas	8%
	Utah	1%
	Vermont	<1%
	Virginia	2%
	Washington	2%
	West Virginia	1%
	Wisconsin	2%
	Wyoming	<1%

CATEGORY BASES

Meal Ingredients	Canned fish & meat	5,197
	Canned vegetables & fruit	6,750
	Non-refrigerated juice and drink mixes	6,009
	Non-refrigerated beverages mixes (coffee, tea, cocoa, creamer)	6,971
	International foods (Hispanic & Asian, including rice & beans)	6,332
	Spices, seasoning, shortening, cooking oils & sprays	7,757
	Condiments, marinades, & dressings	7,731
	Pickles, peppers, marinated vegetables	6,814
	Olives	5,356
	Baking mixes (cake, cookie, brownie, muffin, pancake & waffle mix)	6,903
	Dry baking ingredients (flour, sugar, sugar substitutes)	7,510
	Pasta, pasta sauce, prepared sides & soup	7,758

Ready-to-Eat & Drink	Alcoholic beverages (e.g., beer, wine, spirits, ready-to-drink bev.)	4,933
	Soda and mixers	6,434
	Non-carbonated and energy beverages	5,070
	Jams, jellies & spreads	7,175
	Cereal, breakfast foods & nutrition bars	7,476
	Cookies & crackers	7,646
	Salty snacks	7,660
	Candy, gum & mints	6,657
	Checkstand products (single-serve candy, beverages, snacks)	5,539

Frozen & Dairy	Milk (white & flavored, dairy substitutes, creamer)	7,532
	Eggs	7,654
	Refrigerated juice drinks	6,672
	Refrigerated foods (cottage cheese, sour cream, ricotta, rfg. dips)	7,497
	Other dairy foods (butter, yogurt, cheese)	7,821
	Dairy-alternative foods	4,847
	Refrigerated meat (lunch meat, franks, breakfast sausage & bacon)	7,378
	Frozen entrées	6,806
	Frozen snacks, pizza & breakfast items	6,937
	Frozen vegetables, fruit and juices	7,144
	Frozen desserts and toppings	6,443
	Ice cream & frozen novelties	7,447

Health and Beauty Care	Baby food, diapers, baby care & family planning	2,256
	Skin care & cosmetics	5,722
	Personal care: hair, shaving, deodorant & antiperspirant	7,038
	Feminine hygiene & adult incontinence	4,736
	Oral hygiene; eye, ear & foot care	6,739
	First aid, pain relief, respiratory, vitamins & supplements	7,066

THANK YOU

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To learn more about customized data from the Advantage 2024 Shopper Outlook report contact:

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